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CLAIM AMENDMENTS

1. (cancelled)
2. (currently amended) A method according to claim 1 11, wherein said sulphite is in an amount effective for inhibiting alkaline darkening.
3. (currently amended) A method according to claim 1 11, wherein a pH of at least 6.5 is established in the aqueous suspension of said pulp, containing the calcium carbonate filler and sulphite.
4. (original) A method according to claim 3, wherein said sulphite is selected from alkali metal sulphites, alkali metal bisulphites and alkali metal metabisulphites.
5. (original) A method according to claim 4, wherein said sulphite is selected from sodium sulphite, sodium bisulphite and sodium metabisulphite.
6. (original) A method according to claim 5, wherein said pH is 6.5 to 9.
7. (original) A method according to claim 6, wherein said pH is 7 to 9.
8. (original) A method according to claim 6, wherein the pH is established by addition of a pH buffer or an acid.
9. (original) A method according to claim 6, further including adding in chelating agent to the suspension.
10. (currently amended) A method according to claim 1 11, wherein said sulphite is incorporated in said suspension prior to incorporation of the calcium carbonate filler.

Commissioner for Patents

11. (currently amended) A method ~~according to claim 1~~, of inhibiting alkaline darkening of a mechanical pulp in the presence of a calcium carbonate filler comprising:

providing an aqueous suspension of a mechanical pulp for producing paper, and

incorporating in said suspension a calcium carbonate filler for producing paper with the pulp, and a sulphite to inhibit alkaline darkening of said pulp in said suspension arising from the calcium carbonate filler in the suspension,

wherein said sulphite is incorporated together with said calcium carbonate filler in said suspension.

12. (currently amended) A method according to claim 4 ~~11~~, wherein the sulphite is incorporated in the suspension by addition at a latency chest, storage tank or machine chest during processing of the aqueous suspension to form paper.

13. to 19.. (cancelled)

20. (currently amended) A method of inhibiting darkening of a mechanical pulp in the presence of calcium carbonate comprising:

providing an aqueous suspension of a mechanical pulp for producing paper,

incorporating in said suspension a calcium carbonate filler for producing paper with the pulp ~~and~~ together with a sulphite,

maintaining a pH of 7 to 9 in the resulting suspension containing said pulp, filler and sulphite, and

chemically reacting said sulphite with said pulp to inhibit darkening of said pulp by said calcium carbonate.

21. (previously presented) A method according to claim 20, wherein said sulphite is selected from alkali metal sulphites, alkali metal bisulphites and alkali metal metabisulphites.

Commissioner for Patents

22. (previously presented) A method according to claim 20, wherein said sulphite is selected from sodium sulphite, sodium bisulphite and sodium metabisulphite.

23. (currently amended) A method of producing paper from a mechanical pulp and calcium carbonate filler comprising:

providing an aqueous suspension of a mechanical pulp for producing paper,

incorporating in said suspension a calcium carbonate filler for producing paper with the pulp, and together with a sulphite,

maintaining a pH of 6.5 to 9 in the resulting suspension containing said pulp, filler and sulphite,

chemically reacting said sulphite with said pulp to inhibit darkening of said pulp by said calcium carbonate filler, and

forming said suspension into paper.

24. (previously presented) A method according to claim 23, wherein said sulphite is selected from alkali metal sulphites, alkali metal bisulphites and alkali metal metabisulphite.

25. (previously presented) A method according to claim 23, wherein said sulphite is selected from sodium sulphite, sodium bisulphite and sodium metabisulphite.